

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 404

By Gardenhire

A RESOLUTION to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Second Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga.

WHEREAS, the churches of our nation have been an integral part of our history as a people and have had an unparalleled impact in forming and maintaining a stable and just society; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such dynamic and historic community of faith is Second Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, the members of which are celebrating the church's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary on September 3, 2021; and

WHEREAS, organized in 1871 by fourteen charter members, the original congregation first met in homes and then at Kaylor Theater and Clippinger Hall, until the first church edifice was erected in 1878 at 8<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Street; and

WHEREAS, as the church grew in faith and number, the present-day building was constructed at 7<sup>th</sup> and Pine Street, designed by noted architect R.A. Hunt and dedicated on November 15, 1891; in 1980, the building was included on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2021, the church was approved by the Tennessee Historical Commission to have a marker placed in front of the church; and

WHEREAS, Second Presbyterian Church has a long history of compassionate service to the Downtown Chattanooga community; during World War I, then-pastor Dr. Edgar Elmore led drives on behalf of the Red Cross and Liberty Bonds, and around that same time, the church began to support the Newton Center, now the Newton Child Development Center, which was

originally a Freeman's School before transitioning to a daycare for the west side in the 1940s; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1980s, the church joined with six other downtown churches to form the nonprofit Chattanooga Ministries, Inc.—now known as Chattanooga Community Kitchen—through which they served meals to the hungry and homeless, and since 1984, the church has housed the St. Matthew Shelter, which helps homeless men turn their lives around and move toward independence; and

WHEREAS, the Second Presbyterian Church also partners with the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga through Hope House and supports the Chattanooga Area Food Bank, Northside Neighborhood House, Welcome Home, and the Community Kitchen; the Presbyterian Women's group KnitWits provides quilts for hospice patients and items for newborns in the local hospitals; and

WHEREAS, in addition to hosting Vacation Bible School and youth group meetings, the church supports local youth through the Educational Grant program, providing grants for those attending college; Second Presbyterian has been the home of the Chattanooga Boys Choir since 2009 and often serves as the venue for choral groups, including the Chattanooga Choral Society for the Preservation of African-American Songs and ensembles at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, Second Presbyterian Church has also long supported mission work in the United States and abroad, currently holding a special focus on supporting a missionary family in South Sudan; and

WHEREAS, since its founding, Second Presbyterian Church has been blessed with ten capable, devoted pastors: Reverend W.A. Rice, Dr. J.C. Irwin, Dr. William J. Trimble, Dr. Edgar A. Elmore, Dr. Robert M. Stimson, Dr. Donald A. Spencer, Dr. Robert B. Stewart, Reverend Frank E. Jump, Dr. Perry McCallen, and Dr. Michael Phoenix; and

WHEREAS, this year, the congregation has called Reverend Cathy Meyer to lead the church, making her the first woman to hold this esteemed position; and

WHEREAS, Second Presbyterian Church continues to be a light in the community, and the devout members of the congregation faithfully strive to carry out God's work in the world; and

WHEREAS, as a powerful tool in the service of the Kingdom of God, Second Presbyterian Church is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and nation, and the members of this exceptional congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we join in the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Second Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, thank the good people of this historic congregation and their ministers for their notable service to their Lord and the State of Tennessee, and wish them much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.